

Jean Sibelius

SUITE

Op. 117 (JS185)
(1928–29)

Reduction for violin and piano

reduction by Kari Vehmanen

JEAN SIBELIUS

Suite for Violin and String Orchestra Op. 117

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As is well known, Sibelius put the finishing touches to his orchestral work *Tapiola* in 1926. During the same year he wrote incidental music for a production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* at the Royal Theater in Copenhagen. He created a concert version of this during 1927–08. The period which follows these events is often referred to as "the silence of Järvenpää", during which not a single major symphonic work was ever published from his pen.

This is not to say that Sibelius was inactive. Erik Tawaststjerna makes it clear in his biography that Sibelius worked intensively on an eight symphony during the early 1930's, though the results were never exposed to public scrutiny. During the same period the composer also wrote a number of small-scale works and turned to reworking some of his early works.

In 1929 Sibelius sent some small pieces to the New York publisher Carl Fischer for consideration. Included among these was the Suite for Violin and String Orchestra, to which he had assigned the opus number 117. Fischer was obliged to refuse with this polite comment: "*We must inform you that in view of the extremely unfortunate constellation in the music publishing field in the United States, it seems to us inadvisable at the present time to publish compositions of the high standard you have submitted to us. The market is very unfavorable for this class of music and we are compelled to return them to you with our regrets.*" Fischer's negative response with regard to the suite was evidently a blow to Sibelius's confidence. It is possible that this episode played its part in nurturing an undue level of self-criticism in Sibelius, leading in turn to the demise of the eight symphony. A comment on the score of suite reads "*Skizz. Omarbetas!*" (*Sketch. Still to be worked on.*) Sibelius never returned to it, however, and he seems to have forgotten it thereafter.

The Suite for Violin and String Orchestra represents the culmination point in a series of works written for violin and orchestra which started with the serenades op. 69 and continued with the Six Humoresques opp. 87 & 89. Together these works bear witness to the composer's deep insight into the instrumental possibilities of the violin. In these works, more limited in formal scope than the Violin Concerto though they be, the voice of the solo violin – Sibelius' second mother-tongue – unites with the orchestral writing of a mature and experienced symphonist.

The reduction and solo part are published together for the first time.

— *Fabian Dahlström*

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SUITE

for violin and string orchestra

JEAN SIBELIUS, [Op. 117]

Piano reduction by
Kari Vehmanen (2020)

1. Country Scenery

Allegretto (♩)

Violino

Pianoforte

The first system of the score consists of two staves. The Violino staff (top) begins with a whole rest, followed by a melodic line starting on a quarter rest, marked *poco f*. The Pianoforte staff (bottom) features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in the right hand and quarter notes in the left hand, also marked *poco f*. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 6/8.

5

The second system continues the piece. The Violino staff has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures. The Pianoforte staff continues with the eighth-note accompaniment. In the final measure of the system, the piano part has a *mp marcato* marking and a chordal texture.

9

The third system features a long melodic slur in the Violino staff. The Pianoforte staff has a *cresc.* marking and a *mf* dynamic. The piano part consists of sustained chords in the right hand and quarter notes in the left hand.

2. Evening in Spring

Andantino

Violino

Pianoforte

p

espressivo e dolce

6

10

14

Red.

Red.

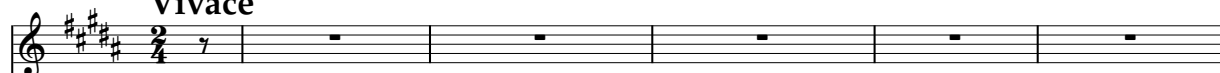
Red.

7

3. In the Summer

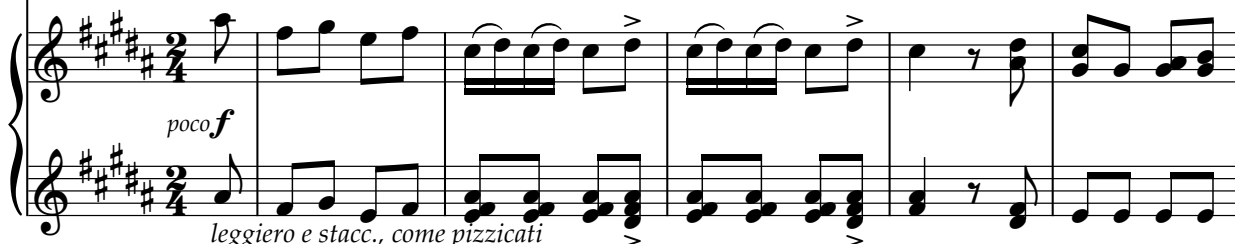
Vivace

Violino



Violino staff with rests.

Pianoforte



Pianoforte staves with notes and dynamics: *poco f*, *leggero e stacc., come pizzicati*.

6

A

spiccato

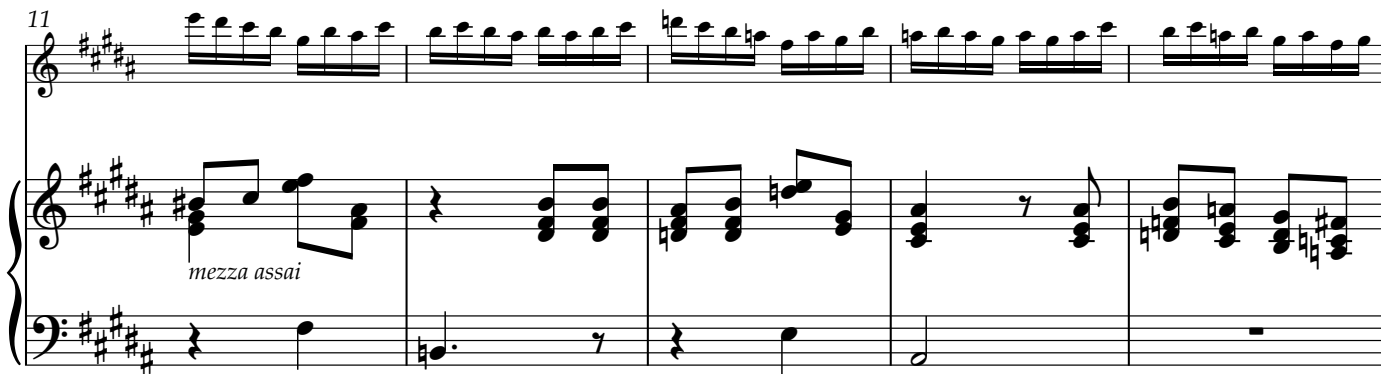
mf



Musical notation for measures 6-10, including a section marked 'A' with *spiccato* and *mf* dynamics.

11

mezza assai



Musical notation for measures 11-15, including a section marked *mezza assai*.

16



Musical notation for measures 16-20.